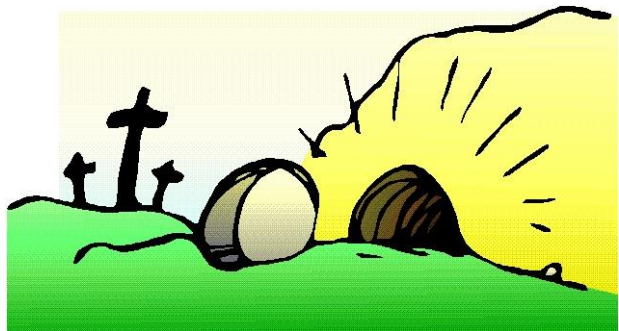


Wantage & Abingdon Circuit

CHILDREY, GROVE & WANTAGE SECTOR



CGW NEWS



MARCH 2024

Minister : Rev Keith Underhill – Tel: 01235 763321
keith.underhill@methodist.org.uk

When Keith is not available, please talk to one of the Stewards listed below, who will put you in touch:

Helen Carter : 01235 764810
Ian Sturt : 07426 772761

Please send material for the **Weekly Notices** to :

Grove Jenny Marriott : 01235 767624
Wantage Gill & Gordon Skidmore : 07710 214601
email : wntgmethodistnotices@gmail.com

Contributions for the **next Newsletter** (April) should be sent to the editor by email, phone or in writing by **Sunday 17th March 2024**

e-mail : wantage.sector.newsletter@gmail.com

Tel : 01235 766655 / 07710 214601

Sunday Services and Church Activities

Wantage Morning Worship is shared each week on Zoom at 10:30
(for access to this please contact Gordon Skidmore)

Grove web site is found from www.wantab.org.uk
Wantage web site www.wantagemethodist.org.uk
Circuit web site www.wantab.org.uk

CGW News Contribution deadline dates – 2024

April	Sunday 17 th March
May	Sunday 21 st April
June	Sunday 19 th May
Summer (July/August)	Sunday 23 rd June

From the Manse.....

Last night's episode of the latest series of the "Great Pottery Throw Down" (Sunday 18th February) on Channel 4 had the remaining contestants making modern lighting sculptures using black and white clay.

If you watched the programme yourselves, you will know that for many of the potters this was an emotional week as they used their life experiences to inspire their creations. Battles with depression and mental health issues alongside dealing with cancer and bereavement found form in what they made.

Whilst not wishing to diminish the realities and the pain of what they had known and experienced, they were nonetheless also aware of how even in the midst of the darkness, there was also light and hope. Often this came in the form of friends and family and all those who stood by them in their times of need.

It was both a moving and inspiring programme to watch.

Jan's creation was titled "Light breaks where no sun shines" a reference to a poem of that name written by Dylan Thomas in 1934.

As we continue our Lenten journey, heading on towards the passion and Easter we are very much aware that the events we are soon to remember and commemorate take us into the depths and into the dark places - culminating as they do in a borrowed tomb and death itself.

Even when the sun is out and the skies are blue, we can find that the weight of our dark places and the experiences of this word can hang heavy on us as we face and deal with our own Gethsemanes.

The world seems to be darker and more threatening than it has for a long time and we are apprehensive and nervous about what might happen next.

The message of Easter has at its very centre the message of light and hope. It takes us back to the beginning of John's Gospel where we find: "and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it."

When on the final day of this month we proclaim that "Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!" may we know the truth of the light shining in the darkness for ourselves and for the world.

Love and God Bless

With love and God Bless

Keith

Stepping out with Noah – March 2024

Keith Underhill

We are continuing with the pattern of one mid-week morning walk and one on a Sunday afternoon.

The dates for March and April are as below - and the details of the routes will be emailed out a few days before to take into account the conditions underfoot etc.

All the walks in March and April will begin from outside the Manse at 14 Haywards Close.

March Wednesday 6th at 10:00 am - walking up to meet "Best Mate"

Sunday 17th at 2:30 pm - up to and around All Souls Church East Lockinge

April Wednesday 10th April at 10:00 am

Sunday 28th April at 2:30pm

The walks will be between 3-4 miles in length. Looking forward to stepping out with you.

HMD events

Our Methodist Circuit marked the Holocaust with three events this year. On HMD day (27th January) we had a reflective time in Wantage with a rolling powerpoint with music, videos and images. Refreshments were also available in the hall.

Rev Bruce Thompson then led a 15 minute act of commemoration at 12 noon.

Then in February we were very privileged to welcome Holocaust Survivor Dr Agnes Kaposi, MBE, FREng and Rabbi Tanya Sakhnovich to events at Wallingford and Wantage. Dr Kaposi talked about her times living in Hungary and her journey on cattle trucks and life in a work camp. Rabbi Tanya sang some beautiful Jewish songs. The sessions were both moving and thought provoking. Dr Kaposi has written a book about her experience entitled "Yellow Star, Red Star". If anyone would like a copy, please contact Rev Bruce Thompson.

Could you help at Oxford Pride 2024?

We're looking for a team of Methodists (from our circuit and nearby) to join in Oxford Pride on Saturday 8th June. Timings to be confirmed, but in 2023, the parade was from 11am-1.30pm, and Pride Day (where we'd have a Methodist stand with cake and freebies) was from 11am-7pm. You wouldn't need to be involved in the whole day.

For more information, or to register interest, contact our Community Chaplain Libby: libby.communitychaplain@gmail.com, 07860805387. Please include your name, contact details, when or what you'd like to help with, and your church.

Wantage & Grove Church Partnership

Congratulations Fr Benji!

We are delighted to finally be able to share this official news from the Diocese of Bristol, which was announced in both parishes this morning:

wantage parish

The Bishop of Bristol is delighted to announce the appointment of the Revd Benji Tyler (currently Assistant Curate in the benefice of Wantage in the Diocese of Oxford) as Vicar of St Andrew Chippenham & St Nicholas Tytherton Lucas. Licensing details to be confirmed in due course.

A message from Fr Benji:

“It has been my privilege and joy to serve the Lord alongside you here in Wantage for the nearly four years of curacy. The parish has formed me and my ministry in so many ways, and taught me, perhaps above all, to be like a well-planted tree - rooted deeply in the love of God but flexible enough to withstand all that life might bring, expected or not! This has certainly been a curacy of some variety (!), but throughout it, you have provided encouragement to embrace every challenge with confidence. I am stronger for you, and I am grateful to the entire community for taking me to your hearts and showing me love, even as I have tried to Live Jesus amongst you.

I will leave you after Easter (DV) with a heavy heart, but I am assured that you are in fine fettle and good hands, and I am pleased to be going to a diocese and a parish with such historic links to Wantage. Long may they continue. God bless you all.”

Children's Clothes Bank

A BIG thankyou to everyone who supported the Children's Clothes Bank and the “Little People” Christmas appeal last year. Because of your generous donations we were able to give clothes to 202 children and help 30 families with Christmas presents.

We have a good selection of clothes at the moment, so if you know of anyone who could do with a helping hand, do get in touch. Or if you would like to be involved, email Helen on w.g.clothesbank@gmail.com.

Helen Margetts Tessa Heron

Clothes Bank Little People

Wantage& Grove Food Bank

Helen Carter

Thank you very much for all the donations of both food and money to the Food Bank. They are much appreciated. If you wish to donate money, there are various ways of getting that to the Food Bank. One way is to put the money into a sealed envelope and give to one of the stewards. Other ways are detailed in the Food Bank website - <https://www.wantageandgrovefoodbank.org.uk/>.

Cornerstone News – March 2024

Staffing

We were sad to say goodbye to Layla Jackman at the beginning of February, Layla has been with us 4 years and having started working just Saturdays, we have been very grateful for her taking on almost full-time hours in the last 6 months and seeing her grow in confidence and skill. She will be greatly missed and we wish her well in her new role with Thames Valley Police.



We are excited that our new Kitchen manager will be joining us on 26th February, I am sure she will receive a warm welcome from all our staff, volunteers and customers.

We will still be looking for an additional part time cook and will be advertising shortly.

Volunteers

We are still in need of more people to help on the counter and the dishwasher, particularly on Saturdays – if that is something you could help with, we'd love to hear from you.

It would be good to have some young people take on this role and in the past, we have had youngsters doing their DofE awards join us so again, if you know anyone who might be interested in this, then do let them know.

In the Bookshop - Lent

We have a number of Lent study books on the shelves or if there is a specific book you want which we don't have in stock we can order it for you.

Here are some important dates for your diary, we have appropriate cards for these and many other occasions in the shop, many at very reasonable prices. Do come and browse.

Mothering Sunday – 10th March

Easter Sunday - 31st March

Monthly hot meal special

We serve a special hot meal on the last Wednesday of the month at 12.30 pm. We do not plan the menu very far ahead, so do ask us nearer the time if you are interested and do book in advance so that we know how many to cater for.

The next dates are: **28th February, 27th March, 24th April**

Make and Bake for Under 5s

Since we restarted in January there has been a good group of regulars coming but there is space for more, so do pass on the details to anyone you know with a toddler; it's **9.30 am every Tuesday** and just £2 still.

Prayer breakfasts

Our monthly prayer breakfasts continue, on the second Saturday of each month. The next one will be on **Saturday 9th March** at 8.30 am. I look forward to you joining us for croissants, tea, coffee, prayer and fellowship.

Cornerstone, 10 Savile Way, Grove, OX12 0PT

Tel.01235 772280 email: office@cornerstonegrove.org.uk

RIDING LIGHTS THEATRE COMPANY presents **The Narrow Road** by **Paul Birch**

Powerful theatre on the journey to Easter.

Riding Lights Theatre Company are pleased to announce a revival of their acclaimed passion play *The Narrow Road* by Paul Birch, for the season of Lent and Holy Week 2024. For many years, Riding Lights Theatre Company has toured its passion plays to churches, cathedrals and communities across the UK, providing a unique, revitalising experience of the drama of Christ's passion.

...vivid and contemporary, with moments of high drama...

Church

Times

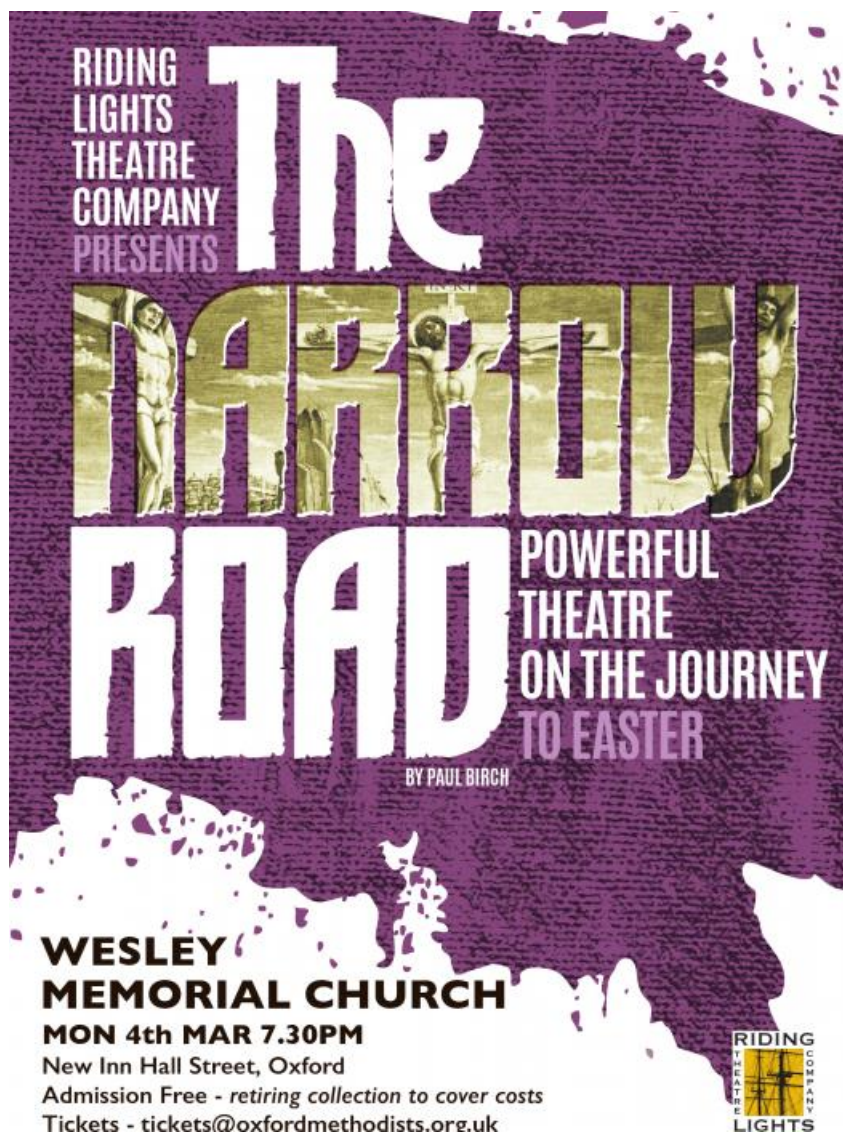
A man stands alone on a dusty road, an extraordinary journey before him; one that will retrace the footsteps of Jesus into a world of miracles and madness, violence and liberation. As *The Narrow Road* is walked, this turbulent world is turned upside down; its inhabitants confronted by an unexpected and surprising vision. Meeting the characters and re-living the events of the gospels, this draws us back along that original road, through the place of the cross and into the challenge of a life beyond. Compellingly performed, *The Narrow Road* asks each of us to step out in faith on that journey today. The performance opens up at key moments for other expressions of worship, music and reflection arising directly out of the drama, creating a powerful act of remembrance which is both participatory and reflective.

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York-based Riding Lights is one of the UK's most successful independent theatre companies and is internationally renowned for more than forty years of touring productions.

**The Narrow Road will be at Wesley Memorial Methodist Church
on Monday March 4th at 7.30pm.**

Free tickets are available from tickets@oxfordmethodists.org.uk



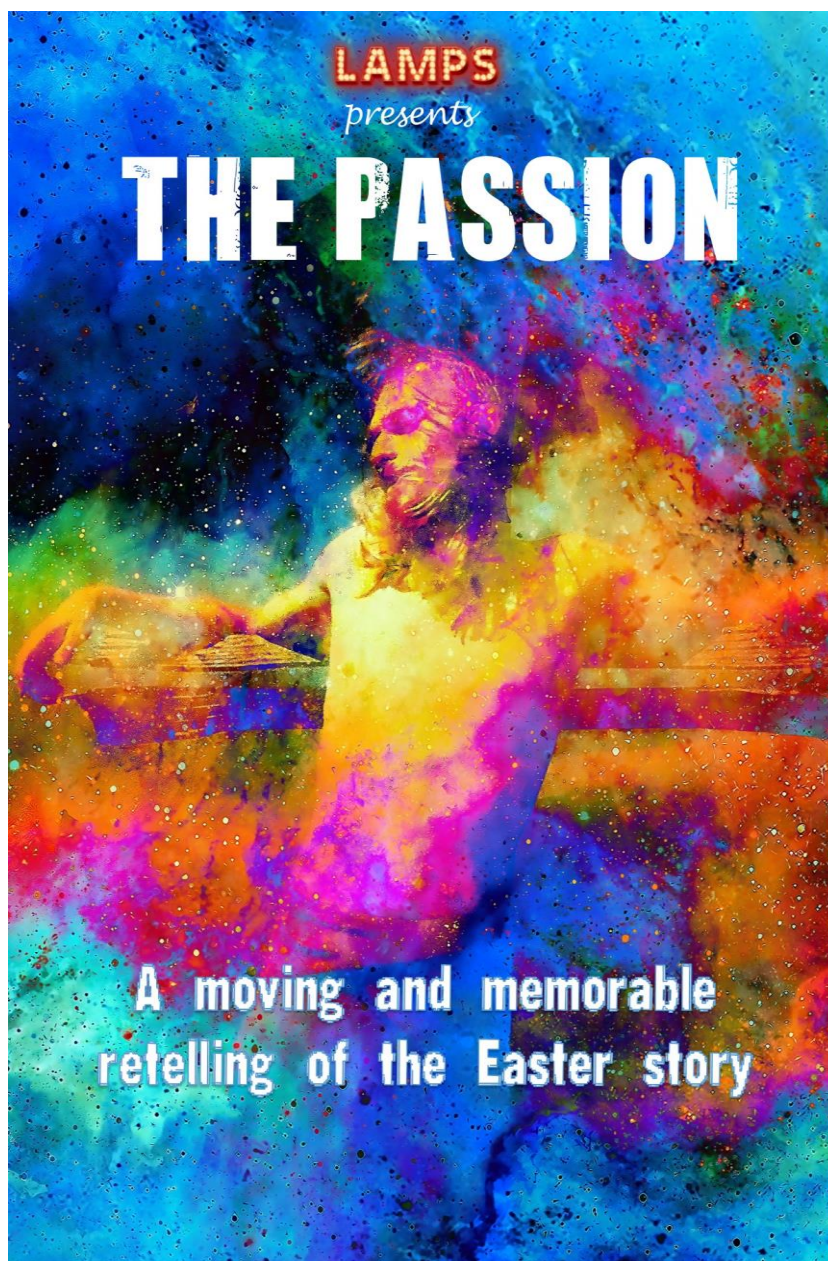
On **Tuesday 26th March**, the Tuesday of Holy Week, the LAMPS Theatre Company will be performing **The PASSION**, at **Bicester Methodist Church**.

The QR code (below) is for Eventbrite tickets.

Alternatively tickets are available from **Bicester Methodist Church..**

Adults £10, under 16's free.

The evening starts at 7.00 pm and there will be refreshments available



Wantage Choral Society presents Two Wonderful French Requiems

Faure Requiem (1890)

Durufle Requiem (1947)

SOPRANO

Sofia Kirwan-Baez

BASS

Jack Redman

ORGAN Sebastian Thomson with orchestra

CONDUCTOR

Hannah Towndrow

Saturday 16th March at 7:30 pm Wantage Parish Church

All tickets £15 from wantagechoralsociety.co.uk

Wantage Bookshop : Members of WCS : on the door

JESUS: DEAD OR ALIVE?

What do you think?

A PASSION PLAY

THURSDAY 28 MARCH

WANTAGE BAPTIST CHURCH, MILL ST

DOORS 7PM • PERFORMANCE 7.45PM

TICKETS FROM THE KING'S CENTRE OR

WWW.WANTAGECC.ORG.UK/EASTER



Wantage and Grove
Church Partnership

Sector services and events for Holy Week 2024

Palm Sunday 24th March

Lectionary: Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 31:9-16; Philippians 2:5-11; Mark 11:1-11

10:00 am Wantage - Market Place
Ecumenical service to mark Palm Sunday.

10:45 am Wantage Methodist Church – Morning Worship
This is a Local Arrangement service (please note the slightly later start time)

10:30 am Grove Methodist Church
Morning service led by Revd Keith Underhill

Monday 25th March

8:00 pm. Wantage Methodist Church
A Holy Week reflection led by Revd Keith Underhill

Tuesday 26th March

8:00 pm. Wantage Methodist Church
A Holy Week reflection led by Revd Keith Underhill

Wednesday 27th March

8:00 pm. Wantage Methodist Church
A Holy Week reflection led by Revd Keith Underhill

Thursday 28th March

Maundy Thursday

7:45 pm Wantage Baptist Church
Jesus Dead or alive? A Passion play by Lamps.
Please see full details in this newsletter and on posters

8:00 pm. Wantage Methodist Church
A sectional Tenebrae service for Maundy Thursday to include Holy Communion - led by Revd Keith Underhill.

Friday 29th March - Good Friday.

Lectionary: Isaiah 52:13-53:12; Psalm 22; Hebrews 10:16-25; John 18:1-19:42

9:00 am Childrey Methodist Church

Worship for Good Friday Morning led by Rev Keith Underhill

11:00 am Ecumenical walking 'pilgrimage' through Wantage stopping at churches along the way (including Wantage Methodist Church) and ending up in the Market Place – full details available soon.

11:00 am United ecumenical open air service on the green opposite Grove Methodist Church followed by tea, coffee and Hot Cross buns at Grove Methodist Church

2:00 pm Wantage Methodist Church

Reflective service led by Rev Keith Underhill

Easter Day 31st March

Lectionary: Acts 10:34-43; Psalm 118:1-2,14-24; 1Corinthians 15:1-11; John 20:1-18

6:30 am Millennium Stones, Ardington

Sunrise service to include Holy Communion led by Rev Keith Underhill

10:30 am Wantage Methodist Church

Easter Morning service led by Rev Keith Underhill with Holy Communion

10:30 am Grove Methodist Church

Easter Morning service at led by Ian Sturt

6:00pm Childrey Methodist Church

"Road to Emmaus" service led by Rev Keith Underhill.

As is our usual practice, there will be a shared tea (please bring some food with you to share) followed by an informal communion.

For all those wishing to walk to Childrey please note that we will be leaving the car park at Wantage Methodist Church at 4:30 pm.

A Different View of the Wilderness

Gordon Skidmore

I have, for many years, pondered over the story of Jesus in the Wilderness and wondered what it is really about. Somehow the idea that Jesus went into the wilderness and had the temptations and responded to them, and later shared his experience with the disciples, or at least someone who could tell the Gospel writers about it, did not ring true to the Jesus I have met in the Gospel account.

There is real desert wilderness in the Holy land arealots of it. But I am not easily willing to accept surreal stories at face value. What is really being shared here?

As I read the gospel accounts of Christ's ministry, I become aware that Jesus encounters all the temptations portrayed in the Wilderness story as he works his way from his baptism in the Jordan to his death on the cross.

"If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."

"If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down. For it is written:

"He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone."

"All this all (the kingdoms of the world and their splendour) I will give you, if you will bow down and worship me."

In other words prioritise being popular, spectacular and powerful.

Jesus leaves home to start his ministry with no secure income or safe place to live in a land that is not that welcoming in all sorts of ways. Hot in the day and cold at night. Politically unstable with insecure religious leaders and puppet governors.

He starts his ministry at the point when the powers threaten and imprison John the Baptist. The world he is going to minister to is the Wilderness where he is to be alone and tempted every day as he challenges the literal application of the religious law, faces the frustrations of being misunderstood and misrepresented as he advocates that life should be lived in the light of love.

"Love God, and your neighbour as yourself."

In a sense, as he did, we grow up and face the challenge of disturbing the comfort and security of routine for the uncertainty of the future, whether it be leaving home for college, or a new job or losing a job, or retirement or declining health. At least in our lives we rarely leave home and become dependent purely on the goodwill of those around us to survive. We are certainly tested as we live our lives. How good it is to be popular, recognised as the best and able to have people do what we want!

But isn't this the reality of "Wilderness" as we encounter it in our daily living. How far do we cling to the warmth and security of our lives to avoid the Wilderness?

A man came up to Jesus and asked, "Teacher, what must I do to get eternal life?"

"If you want to enter life, keep the commandments."

"All these I have kept," the man said. "What do I still lack?"

Jesus answered, "Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Then come, follow me." When the man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth.

Do stay for tea and coffee: 'I'd like to see an annual 'Name-Badge Sunday' with sticky labels to remind us of who's who' - Reform Magazine

Church, eh? No one ever tells you the rules. Alright, I hear you – there are no rules in church. All are welcome, come as you are, just don't sit in Marjorie's seat. So perhaps they're more guidelines. Social norms. Expected occurrences. In brief: rules. Marjorie can be fierce.

I'm easily baffled. When I first joined our church, I spotted in the newsletter: 'We pray this week for those living on Farm Lane, Fullers Crescent and Grove Road.' I thought, Wow, what's happened on those roads?! Has there been some sort of localised natural disaster, sinkhole, or very specific vandalism spree? It turns out that, no, the church prays for different local streets every week. It took me another year to realise that we move alphabetically through the road names.

Every church I've frequented, it's taken me years to puzzle out its ways. As a child, I used to mumble the word 'catholic' in the creed: 'We believe in one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church.' This was an Anglican church, so I thought it had included a misprint, copied and pasted from a Catholic church's printout. Eventually I looked up the word and realised that you don't have to be Catholic to be catholic, you don't have to be Orthodox to be orthodox, and you don't have to be United Reformed to be united and reformed.

Perhaps it's because I became a Christian on my own that I learnt the building blocks of church gradually. I remember mistaking 'The Peace' for 'comfort break'. As everyone wandered around shaking hands, I went to the loo then headed for a post-service coffee a bit too early.

I once went to a megachurch where the opposite happened. It was a long service with a brief interval halfway through. The regulars expected it but a visitor like me didn't have a clue, and no one said what was happening. So when everyone got up for a mingle and a leg-stretch, I thought the service was over. It was only when I got to my car to see nobody following that I went back inside. In hindsight it was odd that we hadn't had a sermon yet.

Newcomers need putting at ease, but even us oldcomers need reminders occasionally. I'd like to see an annual 'Name-Badge Sunday' with sticky labels to remind us of who's who. There are people in my church that I've said hello to for years, but I'm only 80% sure of their names. I daren't chance it, so I end up calling them 'sir', 'madam', 'mate' or 'oi you', depending on age and status. Just when I thought this was just me, our veteran head welcomer recently asked me the name of someone who's been coming for years. Be honest. Do you know the names of everyone in your church? (Alright, show-off.)

Maybe even long-term churchgoers need treating like newbies now and then, with helpful reminders for us all. In the grand scope of eternity, ultimately we're all newcomers, relatively speaking. A few decades are nothing in God's time, so we're all fairly fresh to this planet, let alone our place of worship.

You never know, 'Name-Badge Sunday' might reveal that Marjorie's not been coming for years after all, and we've been needlessly saving her seat all this time. Perhaps Marjorie's looking down from the heavens, chuckling as we bumble around like headless chickens, thinking, 'Good. That's still my seat. I'm glad they know.'

Paul Kerensa is author of So a Comedian Walks into a Church (DLT) and is on tour around the country. Paulkerensa.com @paulkerensa

This article was published in the February 2024 edition of Reform

Wantage and Grove Street Pastors

Website: www.wantageandgrove.streetpastors.org.uk

Email: wantageandgrove@streetpastors.org.uk

REPORT OF OUR DECEMBER 2023 & JANUARY 2024 ACTIVITIES

We patrolled eight times during December 2023 and January 2024. We patrolled in Grove and Wantage on 'Black Friday', the last Friday before Christmas, which we are pleased to say was a busy night that passed without major incident. We also patrolled on New Year's Eve. Again, a busy evening which was good natured and mostly peaceful. Street Pastors attended to a scuffle as it broke out and offered lollies in an attempt to calm things down – and it worked!!!

In January we spent a considerable amount of time with a homeless young man. Having no work, he had fallen on hard times and had been sleeping rough for 4 nights. Being the start of a really cold snap, we tried to find some emergency housing for him but were unsuccessful. We also gave him a hot soup, some snacks, a jumper and a pair of gloves.

The police joined us in trying to find him some accommodation but were also unsuccessful. We used our power pack to charge his phone and he was able to contact a friend and stay in their shed for the night. We met the same man a month later and he said he was really grateful for our help and that he now had somewhere to live.

A member of the public asked us to keep an eye on a young man who was very drunk. His brother had booked a taxi for him so we waited with him and ensured that he got into the right taxi and made his way home safely.

We met a young man who recalled a time when he met Street Pastors while he was drinking in Wantage park underage. He was proud to tell us that he has a job now and doesn't drink as much, he doesn't stay out late and even walks away from fights. He then told us we should bring back Vimto lollies.

We are pleased to report, that after a long period of absence, Vimto lollies are back!

CHILDREY

10th March 11:00 am Morning Worship led by Rev Keith Underhill
This service will include the Sacrament of Holy Communion

24th March 11:00 am Morning Worship led by Elizabeth Wood

Friday 29th March - Good Friday.

9:00 am Morning Worship for Good Friday

led by Rev Keith Underhill

31st March Easter Day

6:00 pm Road to Emmaus Holy Communion

There will be a **Church Meeting** on **4th March at 2:30 pm**

Prayers

We remember in our prayers:

Vicky, Robin and Becky Legge and the Legge family grandchildren. John Cliffe. Keith, and all members and supporters of Childrey Methodist Chapel.

The congregation at St Mary's, Childrey and the people of the village.

All those unknown to us who are in need of our help and prayers.

GROVE

World Day of Prayer (formerly Women's World Day of Prayer) will be held **at Grove Methodist Church on Friday, 1st March** at 2.30 pm. This year's service has been arranged by the ladies of Palestine. There will be refreshments available at the end of the service. All are welcome.

You are invited to a **Coffee Morning on Saturday, 2nd March** from 10 am till noon in the church. Judith and her family are our hosts for the morning. There will be a stall of handmade Easter cards and cards for other occasions. Proceeds are for Freyja's Fund, a charity set up by Freyja's family to make funds available to staff at the J.R. Hospital to help children suffering with cancer and their families.

We hope you can join us for a chat, coffee/tea and cake. We look forward to seeing you. Offers of help with making cakes would be appreciated.

Ecumenical "Prayer for Revival" is held on the first Sunday of each month in our church. The next meeting is on **Sunday, 3rd March** at 6.30 pm till 8 pm. All are invited to come and pray with us. All are welcome.

Film Club will meet on **Friday, 15th March** at 7.30 pm in the Meeting Room. We will be showing "An Inspector Calls". Directed by Aisling Walsh based on the play by J B Priestley.

A mysterious inspector investigates the wealthy Birling family and their dinner guest following the suicide of a young woman.

Cast: Sophie Rundle, Lucy Chappell, Miranda Richardson, Ken Stott, David Thewlis

All are welcome. Admission is free; a small donation helps to cover the cost of licences and DVDs. Masks are optional.

Tuesday Fellowship will meet on **Tuesday, 26th March** at 2.15 pm. Veronica and Graham have invited us to meet at their home, 17 Cowslip Road, Wantage, OX12 7FX, when Veronica will show pictures and talk about their recent travels in South America. All are welcome. Please contact Kath nearer the time about transport arrangements, either to offer or ask for a lift.

Craft Group meets at the Cornerstone Coffee Shop on Monday afternoons from 2 pm to 4 pm. All are welcome. Bring your own craft to do and enjoy a chat and exchange of ideas with other crafters while you work. We each give a donation of £1 to Cornerstone and buy a drink of our choice.

Thank you for your support for the Coffee Morning for Emmaus in February. Donations amounted to £256.05 to which was added the Gift Aid tax rebate from last year £29.17 and the total sent was £285.22. Thank you to everyone.

Thank you also to all those who generously continue to support the Foodbank by putting contributions in the box in the entrance hall week by week. **Thank you.**

All your contributions are very much appreciated. The need is still great.

We continue to hold in our prayers all those who are in poor health or have other difficulties and problems. We trust that, with care, life has opened up again for you.

WANTAGE

Holy Habits (lite iv)

In our fourth Holy Habit we are exploring **Worship**. The next dedicated Sunday service will be on **March 3rd** and it will be led by Helen Carter.

The **film** that we will be watching is **Sister Act** and will be shown at 7:30 pm on **Wednesday April 3rd**.

There are **two books** that we are suggesting people might like to read this time round:

“A friend for little bear” by Harry Horse (a Children's picture book) published by Walker Books ISBN 978-1-4063-3166-0 and

“The Essex Serpent” by Sarah Perry published by Serpents Tail (2016) an imprint of Profile Books Ltd ISBN 9781788169622

This novel (historical fiction) explores whether there's more to life than meets the eye or that faith convinces us of things not seen (Hebrews 11.1) It addresses the issues of folk religion, superstition, true faith and an awareness of the beauty of creation and a sense of awe and wonder (which as we know, is at the heart of worship)

Book Discussion

Jane Kent (07443 420205)

We will next meet on **Saturday 6th April** at Cornerstone at 10 am to discuss the two books (see above) - feel free to read one or both. Everyone is welcome - as we have a children's book this time it would be wonderful to welcome some children too!

Kids@Church

Jane, Dave, Cath and Keith

We had a great morning in February starting in the church exploring the story of Jesus calming the storm. In the hall we played some fun games with the parachute and enjoyed some colouring in before we shared breakfast together.

Our next **kids@Church** is on **Sunday 17th March** meeting in the church at 9:30 am.

Kids@Church is an informal, monthly gathering for children and their parents / carers from 9.30 - 10.15 am. New families always welcome!

If you have any questions please feel free to give me (Jane Kent) a call on 07443420205.

Bible Study at Elmbrook Care Home

This Bible Study is held at the new care home on Grove Road. It is held on the second Monday of the month at 2.30 pm, lasting between 30-45 mins. In February we looked at 1 Corinthians 13 and talked about the theme of love. Our next sessions are: **March 11th** when we will look at John 19:12-16 (Jesus is condemned); **April 8th** when we will look at John 20:11-18 (Jesus appears to Mary) and on **May 13th**, which is near Pentecost Sunday, we will look at Acts 2:1-13. Residents really appreciate people from our church joining in their study and we often enjoy fellowship with a cup of coffee in the Elmbrook lounge afterwards.

Tuesday Afternoon Prayer and Study Group

Eileen Rennie

In February we started our Lent Study, a Cover-to-Cover Study written by Anne Calver, a Baptist minister, author and speaker. It is a six session Bible Study looking at different aspects of Christ's character helping us see from a fresh perspective who He really is and the eternal impact that left on the world. These six sessions look at Jesus as the builder, the humble King, the holy King, the harvester, the risen King and the commissioner who sends His people out into the world with the message of His love. Anne Calver invites us to reacquaint ourselves with the awesome person of Jesus and be reminded of the call on our lives to follow Him.

We have booked our regular visit to the Convent in Holy Week to visit the Stations of the Cross for Reflection and Prayer. If you would like to join us for this visit **on Tuesday 26th March** at 2 pm please let Eileen Rennie know **by Sunday 10th March** latest and I will add your name to the booking form.

In April we will start the Holy Habits Worship studies.

We meet in the Parlour each Tuesday at 2 pm. This is an open friendly group who meet to study and pray each week so please feel free to come along and join us any week. You can be assured of a warm welcome. Please be assured if you cannot meet with us that you are remembered in prayer.

Prayer is an important part of our meeting and we spend time each week praying for people and situations near and far. If you have someone or a situation you would like us to pray for please let me know.

Dates for March are as follows:

- 5th Lent Study 4: The Harvester. Bible Readings Matthew 13:24-30, Acts 2:1-4.
This meeting includes the Monthly Prayer list.
- 12th Lent Study 5: The Risen King. Bible Reading John 11:25-44
- 19th Lent Study 6: The Commissioner. Bible Readings John 21:1-17,
Matthew 28:18-20
- 26th At St. Mary's Convent to visit the stations of the Cross for reflection and prayer

If you have any queries you can contact me (Eileen Rennie) by telephone on 01235 224284 or email: eileenrennie@icloud.com

Evening Lent Group

Alison Phillips

There will be an evening Lent group, on **Thursday evenings** from **February 15th to March 21st** arriving from 7 pm for coffee and chat, then to start at 7.30 pm and finish at 9.00 pm latest. It is meeting at 1 Mill Paddock, Letcombe Regis.

We are using material by Gordon Giles called "At Home in Lent: An exploration of Lent through 46 objects". Gordon Giles spends each week in a different room gleaning spiritual lessons from everyday household objects. As a result, you might discover that finding God in the normal pattern of life - even in the mundane - transforms how you approach each day. Running as a thread through it all are the seven Rs of Lent: regret, repentance, resolution, recognition, reconciliation, renewal and resurrection.

Pastoral

Ann Barber

Until almost the very end of March we continue our journey through Lent, remembering as we travel all that Jesus faced during his wilderness journey. We hold in our thoughts and our prayers all those within our church family who are currently facing difficult journeys in their own lives. May we experience a sense of belonging together, offering support, compassion and pastoral care to each other.

We continue to miss several people whom we mentioned last month whose illness and frailty are still preventing them from worshipping with us, and we reassure them of our prayers for their recovery and improved health.

Following Stella Belcher's return to Pegasus Court having looked after her husband in Elmbrook Court until he died in January, she is once again attending our Sunday morning Services. It is good to have Stella with us, and we welcome her back amongst our congregation.

Two other people who have also joined us relatively recently are Georgina Booth and Tish Dawson. They both live quite near to our church and we hope that they are also feeling at home in our services and will continue to worship with us.

In case the absence of flowers in Church since Lent began is generating concern or disappointment, hopefully an explanation will help. Repeating the Lent liturgy which we have followed for the last two years, the bare wooden Cross stands on the dais as our central focus. Each week symbols representing the events and stages of Christ's journey towards his crucifixion are placed at the foot of the Cross. Whilst we journey through Lent, towards the renewing light of the Easter dawn, it would be incongruous to decorate our worship space alongside the starkness of the unadorned Cross. So there will be no flowers in our worship space from now until after Good Friday. We know from previous years that, on that happiest day of our Christian calendar, the transformation will be one of glorious colour, and on Easter Day we will receive that joyous reassurance of new life reflected in all of the flowers adorning it.

Praying for each other: In March the following people on **Alison Brown's Pastoral List** will be included in the prayer time at the Tuesday Bible Study group: June and Alan Grunwald, Jane Robinson, Judith and Mike Skinner. In addition to the names listed above, those in our church family, who through frailty or ill health can no longer worship with us on Sundays, will also be prayed for by name at the Bible Study Group.

Prayer WhatsApp group

Holy Habit of Prayer

Helen Carter

Sometimes an urgent request for prayer comes our way, and sometimes there is a prayer in the prayer box which needs our immediate attention. With those circumstances in mind a WhatsApp group was set up so we can share such need for prayer. This is a small group just now, but it would be lovely if more of the church family felt able to join us. If you would like to know more, or indicate you want to join the group, then please talk to Helen Carter.

Prayer list

Eileen Rennie

Loving God, we praise and thank you for your presence with us each day. Guide us in this Lent period to spend time each day to focus our thoughts, study and prayer on your teachings and especially on your journey in the final weeks of your earthly life and the messages you have left with us to reflect on and build our lives on. In this broken world where so many people and places need your peace and love we pray that they may know your presence with them as they struggle. Support those who so willingly give their time and effort to bring relief to all who are suffering. Open our eyes to ways we can bring support to those in need. We offer this prayer in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

Please pray for

Bethan Grant, Anne, Carol Mackinder, Emma Wright and family, Caroline, Anne and Doug Hatto, Richard in York, Adrian, Diane, Diane's daughters Julie and Claire, Geoff, Meriel, Jane Robinson, Maggie, June Hartle, Richard and Anne, Peter, Louise, John and Jo, Mary Spalding, Jane and Harry Rudd, Jane and Enma Soffe and family, Trudy, Jade, Steve. All at Bullingdon Prison, staff, prisoners and visitors, our Ministers, Deacon, Local Preachers and Worship Leaders, Community Chaplains, kids@church, Street Pastors and Cornerstone. Those members of our church family who, through frailty or ill health, can no longer worship with us.

If you or the person/people you have put on the prayer list would still like to be in the April Newsletter, please let me know by **Friday 15th March** in order for me to meet the Newsletter deadline. Eileen Rennie

Telephone 01235-224284, or email eileenrennie@icloud.com

Lunchtime prayers

On the 2nd Tuesday of each month from 12.30 pm to 1 pm a prayer session is held in the vestry (but will be moved to another part of the building if it starts to get a bit crowded in that area). All are welcome to join us. If you want specific people or situations prayed for then please let Helen Carter know, or put a prayer on the prayer tree in the foyer in the chapel. It would be really helpful if you put a date on the request if you use that method. Those prayers will be included and we always pray for those on our prayer list and situations that we are aware of that need our prayers. **The date of the March meeting for the diary is Tuesday 12th March.**

Recycling box

Please note that the Mix cannot take blister packs now and so none should be put into the box that lives in the chapel foyer. The only items that can be taken to the Mix are empty toothpaste tubes, empty printer cartridges and writing implements - either working or not working. Thank you.

PS: It is reported on Facebook that Boots in Abingdon has a box for blister pack recycling. Maybe Wantage will follow suit?

Community Café

June Grunwald

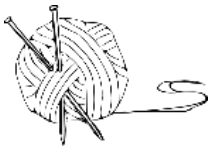
The Community Café was busy in February. We were delighted to learn of the engagement of two café regulars, Emily and Andrew. We were also pleased to see some new people at the café.

The café does not charge for coffee or home-made cakes, but each week we have “piggy banks” for donations to a charity. Our charity for December, January and February is Grove Day Centre and, at the time of publication, we have already raised £461. Our charity for March, April and May is Christian Aid.

The café is open every Monday from 9 am to 12 noon. All are welcome. Our thanks to all the volunteers on the rota who make the café such a welcoming place to come to and who provide such delicious cakes. If you cannot commit regularly but would be willing to be called upon at short notice it would be helpful. Although we can operate the café with less people, having 2 coffee makers and 2 welcomers each Monday is ideal. If you would like to learn more about the café please see June Grunwald or Eileen Rennie.

Knit & Chat

Carolyn Roche



Our meetings this month will be on **Monday 4th March and Monday 18th March at 2pm in the Hall.** We look forward to meeting and chatting with you then and sharing the progress of the various projects that you are currently working on. I have begun my Lent shawl and so far there has been much unpicking. Fortunately I have the accompanying Lent reflections to calm me.

Remember that you can join our Knit & Chat Facebook group. Please let June G know if you wish to do so. If you need wool, have any other queries or just fancy a chat do please call me. (764310)

Annual Report

Contributions for the church annual report / review should reach Gordon Skidmore by **March 1st** please. Email wmcannualreport@gmail.com

The annual church meeting will be on **April 28th** and we would wish to publish the report/review with the April edition of CGWNEWS.

Thank you

What is happening on the Wantage premises at present?

Sunday	9:30 am	Kids@Church	3 rd Sunday
	10:30 am	Morning Worship In person and on Zoom	Weekly
Monday	Morning	Drop-in Café in the Hall	Weekly
	Afternoon	Knit & Chat in the Hall	see article
Tuesday	Afternoon	Prayer & Study Group in the Parlour	Weekly
Friday	Afternoon	Caritas Choirs	Weekly in term
Users	All in the Hall		
Monday	Evening	Slimming World	Weekly
		CA Meeting	Weekly
Tuesday	Morning	MIND	Weekly
	Evening	Wantage Camera Club	Weekly
Wednesday	Afternoon	My Life My Choice	Last Wednesday
	Evening	Wantage Sings	Weekly
Thursday	Midday	KAWI	3 rd Thursday
Friday	Morning	Mothers & Toddlers	Weekly in term
Saturday	Morning	Dads Out	1 st Saturday

March

Saturday 2 nd	Afternoon	Private Party	Hall
Thursday 7 th	Afternoon	Youth Justice	Parlour
Thursday 21 st	Evening	Music Makers	Hall

April

Wednesday 3 rd	Evening	Film	Chapel
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May

Thursday 2 nd	Local Elections – Polling Station		Hall Building
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DIARY for FEBRUARY/MARCH

FEBRUARY

Tuesday 27th 2:15 pm **Grove Tuesday Fellowship** p14

MARCH

Friday 1st **Wantage Annual Report Deadline**

Saturday 2nd 10:00 am **Coffee Morning** at Grove p14

Sunday 3rd 6:30 pm **Prayer for Revival** at Grove p14

Monday 4th 2:00 pm **Knit & Chat** at Wantage p21

2:30 pm **Childrey Church Meeting** p13

Wednesday 6th 10:00 am **Stepping out with Noah** p4

Wednesday 6th 7:30 pm **Circuit Meeting** at Milton

Monday 11th 2:30 pm **Bible Study** at Elmbrook Care Home p17

Tuesday 12th 12:30 pm **Lunchtime Prayers** at Wantage p20

Friday, 15th 7:30 pm **Film Club** at Grove - "An Inspector Calls" p14

Sunday 17th 9:30 am **Kids@Church** at Wantage p17

DEADLINE for April CGW NEWS

Monday 18th 2:00 pm **Knit & Chat** at Wantage p21

Thursday 21st 7:30 pm **Music Makers** at Wantage

HOLY WEEK

For services see pp10/11

Tuesday 26th 2:15 pm **Grove Tuesday Fellowship** p13

APRIL

Wednesday 3rd 7:30 pm **Holy Habit Film** – "Sister Act" p17

Saturday 6th 10:00 am **Holy Habit Book discussion** at Cornerstone p17

SUNDAY SERVICES during MARCH

All Services from Wantage are shared on Zoom

Sunday 3rd Lent 3

Lectionary: Exodus 20:1-17; Psalm 19; 1Corinthians 1:18-25; John 2:13-22

10:30 am	Wantage	Holy Habits	Helen Carter
10:30 am	Grove		Rev Keith Underhill
This service will include the Sacrament of Holy Communion			
6:30 pm	Grove	Prayer for Revival	

Sunday 10th Lent 4 Mothering Sunday

Lectionary: Numbers 21:4-9; Psalm 107:1-3,17-22; Ephesians 2:1-10; John 3:14-21

10:30 am	Wantage	Libby Bolton
10:30 am	Grove	Peter Hemmings
11:00 am	Childrey	Rev Keith Underhill
This service will include the Sacrament of Holy Communion		

Sunday 17th Lent 5 Passion Sunday

Lectionary: Jeremiah 31:31-34; Psalm 51:1-12; Hebrews 5:5-10; John 12:20-33

9:30 am	Wantage	Kids@Church
10:30 am	Wantage	Rev Keith Underhill
This service will include the Sacrament of Holy Communion		
10:30 am	Grove	Local Arrangements

Sunday 24th Palm Sunday

Lectionary: Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 31:9-16; Philippians 2:5-11; Mark 11:1-11

10:45 am	Wantage	Local Arrangements
10:30 am	Grove	Rev Keith Underhill
11:00 am	Childrey	Elizabeth Wood

Sunday 31st Easter Sunday

Lectionary: Acts 10:34-43; Psalm 118:1-2,14-24; 1Corinthians 15:1-11; John 20:1-18

6:30 am	Millenium Stones	Sunrise Communion	Rev Keith Underhill
10:30 am	Wantage		Rev Keith Underhill
This service will include the Sacrament of Holy Communion			
10:30 am	Grove		Ian Sturt
6:00 pm	Childrey	Road to Emmaus	Rev Keith Underhill
This service will include the Sacrament of Holy Communion			